

THE HIDING OF MOSES BY FAITH

NO. 1421

A SERMON
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*“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents,
because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid
of the king’s commandment.”
Hebrews 11:23.*

AS I observed to you in the exposition, the stress in these passages of sacred biography should be laid upon the words “by faith.” The mighty deeds of heroes and the obedient acts of pilgrim fathers are only told to us because they spring out of faith. It is to commend the root that the fruits are mentioned. The children are named one by one that the mother may have the praise, for faith is the mother of all virtues.

According to this book God estimates men by their faith, and “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Faith is well-pleasing to the Most High, but it is in proportion to its strength, for there are cases in which weakness of faith has evidently been followed by chastisement, and other cases in which strength of faith has been abundantly honored. The more you believe the more God blesses you. If you believe with faith as small as a grain of mustard seed you shall be saved, for where there is faith there is salvation, but if your faith be weak, you shall miss many comforts, and only as your faith shall grow and become strong through divine grace shall you be a receiver of the greater, deeper, and higher things of the covenant of grace.

More faith is what we want, and the Lord is willing to give it, grace upon grace, He delights, especially, to strengthen the faith which we already possess by trying it, by sustaining it under trial, and thus rooting and grounding it, and causing it to become firm and vigorous. Oh that we might so live evermore that the Lord might see in all our actions that they spring from faith. Then shall our actions as well as ourselves be always accepted of Him by Christ Jesus, for the Lord has plainly declared, “the just shall live by faith; but if any man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him”—that is, draw back from faith and run in the way of sense and feeling.

Having begun by faith we are to live by faith. We are not to find life in the Gospel and then nourish it by the law. We are not to begin in the Spirit and then seek to be made perfect by the flesh, or by confidence in man, but we must continue still to walk by the simple faith which rests only upon God, for this is the true spirit of a Christian. Faith is the freewoman’s child, and it cannot live with merit, or self-righteousness, for that is the bondwoman’s child, and the Scripture says, “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”

Now faith is in God’s sight the very soul of all holy actions. That which is done without faith, even though, in itself considered, had there been faith at the back of it, it might have been accepted, yet it is not accepted without faith. As no sacrifice, even though it were an unblemished one, should be offered except with salt and with fire, and that fire a holy and heavenly fire, so nothing will be accepted of God except it be mixed with faith. Hearing is no hearing to profit if it be not mixed with faith in them that hear it, and doing may even stand in our way unless first of all we have attended to that work—that God-like work—that work of God—that we believe in Him whom He has sent.

There must be faith, without it, it is impossible to please God, and He measures our actions according to the faith from which they proceed. I do again, therefore, very strongly say, I take the meaning of these texts to be not a laudation of the acts themselves so much as an honor put upon faith itself by the Holy Spirit.

If you read of those who subdued kingdoms, that is not the point, others have subdued kingdoms, but it is “who *through faith* subdued kingdoms.” If you read of those who escaped the edge of the sword, many have done that, but none are recorded here but those “who *by faith* escaped the edge of the sword.” “Turned to flight the armies of the aliens,” many have done that by valor and strength, but to do it *by faith*, that is the thing. Many have endured scourgings and bonds and imprisonments, and have wandered about destitute, afflicted, tormented, but such sufferings are nothing unless they are borne by faith.

I might almost quote the words of Paul, only altering them a little, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not faith, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not faith, it profits me nothing”

Faith first, midst, last, must be the walk, life and triumph of the Christian. God gives to faith, God accepts from faith, God saves through faith, God keeps through faith, God sanctifies through faith, God perfects through faith. In all good things the power, life, and acceptance are “not of works, lest any man should boast,” but by faith that all things may be of grace alone.

I come now to take up the instance of faith mentioned in the text, and as I do so I trust many here will be asking themselves the question, “Have I that faith which sees the invisible? Have I a faith which exercises an operative power over my entire life? Am I a believer in God, in His dear Son, in His most sacred word? Is that faith real, practical, effective? If not, I can be sure that I am without God and without hope in the world. If He by His grace has given me the faith of His elect whereby I discern Him, recognize Him, act towards Him as the God that is and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, then I am accepted in Christ Jesus.”

Let us read our text again and then we will fall to, and gather instruction from it. “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment”—their faith made them brave, and led them to preserve their little one.

I. My first observation about this brief narrative is this, IT IS A GREAT BLESSING WHEN IN A FAMILY BOTH THE PARENTS HAVE FAITH.

Paul, in one text says, “By faith he was hid three months *of his parents*.” Now you will please to notice that Moses himself, in the account which he gives in the second chapter of Exodus, ascribes this to his mother—“When *she* saw that he was a goodly child she hid him three months.” Stephen in his speech before the Sanhedrin, says, “In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father’s house three months,” thus mentioning rather his father than his mother. Paul writes in Hebrews, “He was hid three months of his parents,” thus mentioning both of them. No doubt the apostle combined the two other inspired utterances.

Do you wonder that Moses chiefly mentions his mother, Jochebed? I do not. What man is there among us but always delights to mention his godly mother, and though we would have no partialities about our parents, yet without controversy great is the mystery of a mother’s love, and there are some points about it in which it makes a deeper impression upon the memory than a father’s care. Prize fathers as you may, and will, and should, yet there is a tender touch that comes home to every man’s heart when he thinks of his mother. It seems natural that Moses should when he wrote the account mention most of all his mother, and indeed, and of a truth, a mother has more to do with a babe than a father can have, in its tender infancy she is naturally its chief guardian. Perhaps, too, though we cannot be sure, Jochebed may have been the stronger believer of the two, and may have been the main instigator of the child’s preservation.

There are other instances in Scripture of the same sort, if it were so. Manoah would have been sadly put about if it had not been for his wife when she said, “If the Lord had meant to destroy us, he would not have showed us such things as these.” The mother of Zebedee’s children is often mentioned, while

very little is said about Zebedee, and I know there are many instances now extant, where if we had to write the religious history of families, albeit that the father is a good man, yet the mother, I was about to say, is a better, and would be the prominent actor in any family deed of faith.

Well, let us imagine it to have been so. Jochebed, the wife, has the stronger faith. She is not a business person. She stops at home and looks after little Moses as she did after little Aaron and little Miriam in their time. The father must go out brick-making and earn the family bread, but mother at home, though not conspicuous but rather obscure, walks near to God and believes in Him, and so becomes the very center and pivot upon which the household rests and turns.

It is often so, and blessed is that man who can say as much of his own wife. He will never be envious of her, but rather rejoice that, if he be Amram, God has given him a Jochebed whom his son Moses will mention in years to come even if he forgets his father. The husband will be well content to have it so, for the joy and peace which he receives from a godly woman of decided and vigorous piety will be an abundant compensation for being a little overshadowed in the memory of an honored son.

But what a blessing it was, dear friends, that although Moses does not say his father hid him, yet he had his share in it, for Stephen says he was nourished three months in his father's house. The father was cognizant of it, and helpful in it, and hopeful about it, he was fully consenting, and agreeing, and assisting in all that the mother did. Would God it were so in all families. When husband and wife fit together in the things of God like tenon and mortice, then is the house well built, but when the mistress pulls one way and the master draws the other, when one is for Christ, and the other is for Belial, the house is divided against itself and how can it stand?

It is no marvel when both parents serve the Lord that their children are brought up in His fear, and become their happiness and their honor, and it is equally natural that if an ungodly father undoes all that can be done by a godly mother, the evil example of the stronger should be followed rather than the godly example of the weaker. If I address any husband here, who is as yet an unbeliever, I can but pray the Lord and join my prayers with those of his wife that he may be brought to know the Lord and rest in Him.

Both the parents of Moses believed, so my text says, and both acted by faith in disobeying the cruel order of the king. If they had not agreed about it, I do not see how Moses could have been concealed, but they both went together in the hiding of the child, and dear friends, how well it will be if we all go together in the endeavor to bring our children to Christ. If our prayers are united, if our example is one, if our teaching is never contradictory, if both parents are with like earnestness seeking the salvation of their little ones, we may rest assured the promise will be kept, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

II. Our second remark shall be that TRUE AND EVEN REMARKABLE FAITH MAY ACT IN A VERY COMMONPLACE WAY.

What do we read? By faith they "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword," and so on, and so on. Why these are great things, and worthy of mention among memorable deeds. Yes, but this also is great in its way—"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents." It has no trumpet ring about it like stopping lions' mouths quenching fires, and subduing kingdoms, but in God's consideration, from his point of view, the hiding of a little baby three months, may be as great an instance of admirable and acceptable faith as any of them, even turning to flight the armies of the alien may not be greater than defeating the malice of a king by saving a little child.

But you say to me, "It was a very natural thing for a mother to do. When Pharaoh had given orders that all the male children should be destroyed, was it not natural enough that a mother should try to preserve her child's life? Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" Yes, yes, I know all that, and admit it, but still the Lord is not praising the natural affection, but the supernatural faith. A very strong current is seen when nature and faith both set the same way, yet it is not nature but faith which bears the sway. Sometimes faith has to go against nature,

as in the case of Abraham when he was bidden to offer up his son, and then faith wins the victory, and here, though faith and nature ran together and so made the current stronger, still the text does not say, “By the force of nature, by the natural love of parents for their child, Moses was hid three months.” No, but they did it, “by faith,” so the Spirit says, and He knows how they came to do it better than we do. We should say, “Nature led them to conceal the babe,” but God says, “Faith led them to do it,” and in their degree, both are true. Nature prompted, but faith compelled, constrained, and enabled them to do what else their timidity would not have ventured upon.

But was it not a very simple thing to be doing by faith—the mere hiding of a child? Yes, but not so easy as it looks. Sometimes, I suppose, the mother said, “Hush! Hush! Hush! Dear child, you must not cry, whatever your pain, as Egyptian children may, for if some stranger should hear a child’s cry it will be reported to Pharaoh’s murdering officers, and you will die.” Many, many times the instinctive cry must have been hushed by a mother’s sedulous care, and when neighbors came to the door little can we tell the difficulty to put them off the scent, to keep them from knowing that there was such a little living treasure anywhere about the house.

How often would callers in the daytime put the family into a fever and in the middle of the night how readily would both parents start if someone knocked at the door, or loitered under the window. A rustling outside their poor little house would make them full of alarm. They were so distressed because they were breaking the king’s law, and though they were not afraid of it they were afraid of the king’s officers, who might come and seize their child.

Yes, it was a very simple thing to do, just to hide away a baby—keep it quiet, and not let anybody know about it, but it was done by faith, and that makes the act divine. It was natural, it was simple, I admit all that, but when the Holy Ghost says, “By faith his parents hid him,” it makes the simple and the natural action to glow with an unusual glory, like the bush in Horeb, which was only a bush, but yet the Lord appeared in it.

And here is the point of it, dear friends, mothers, daughters, sisters, and all of you engaged in common life, do you not see how you can make faith tell about ordinary things? You think I preach by faith in this pulpit, and so I do, blessed be God, but then you can darn stockings by faith, mend and piece and save, and make a little go a long way by faith. When you are ill, you can lie and cough by faith without being impatient. You can keep your temper sweet with a provoking husband, or a disobedient child, by faith.

You can do all sorts of things by faith. It rides the whirlwind, but it threads a needle, it climbs up to the throne of God, and yet it stands by a baby’s cradle, it can obtain the promises, but it can sit down and twist bulrushes, boil bitumen, and stir a tar pot to pitch a little ark within and without with pitch, if it be necessary. There is nothing that faith cannot make noble when it touches it. You need not say, “I want to get away from my daily business, or from my domestic concerns, in order to show my faith.” No, no, stop where you are and show it.

If a soldier wants to be brave, and asks his captain what he can do, he will tell him, “You keep rank in the day of battle, you fire your gun when the word is given.” In order to be a brave man you need not leave the ranks, or run up to the cannon’s mouth out of mere bravado. Soldier of Christ, just keep your place. Do the work appointed by the great Lord, trusting in Him, and believing in His power to help you. So shall you make your life sublime, however commonplace it may appear to carnal eyes.

By faith these parents hid their child *three months*—a short time, perhaps, you will think. If you had to go through their anxieties you would reckon that it was the longest three months you ever lived. Three months the officers are after your darling child, and every time you look it in the face you are afraid it will be snatched away from your arms to be flung into the river. In vain, O mother, do you give your child its daily food, in vain you delight in its dimpled cheek and laughing eyes, for it must die. The crocodiles of the Nile must feast upon that beloved flesh.

Such would her fears be day and night. Three months both parents must have been in great distress, and they could hardly have held on under such an agony of mind if it had not been by faith, but faith

enabled them to watch during the weary days which must have been crowded with tortures. Though the time seems short to you who never lost a child, and to all of us who never knew what it was to live under the heart-rending peril of having our infant murdered, yet it filled all the little world of a mother's and a father's heart, and what could be worse? They bore the perpetual anxiety, and hid the child by faith, believing and hoping that God would have pity upon them.

III. A third principle which we will lay down is this, that FAITH WILL ACT WITH A VERY SLENDER ENCOURAGEMENT.

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, *because they saw he was a proper child.*” As I read these words I thought to myself, “I wonder what parents do not see their children to be very proper children?” It seems to be the general rule that we have all of us—at least all mothers—the most beautiful children that ever have been born. A slender reason it seems to be for hiding a child three months. Stephen says in his speech that the child was “exceeding fair,” and if you look at Stephen's speech you will see that the translators have put in the margin, “fair to God.” So it may run, “when they saw that the child was fair to God.”

Now, I gather from that expression that the child was exceedingly beautiful, beyond the common run of children, that there was a charm about its features, a remarkable glory about its face, and something superhuman, probably, since it was fair to God. A *spiritual* air floated about the child's face, as if it bore some glimmerings of the glory of Sinai, of the wondrous shepherd-lawgiver who led the people forty years through the wilderness. In the baby's face there were prophecies of the man of God. Surely among them that have been born of women there has not been born a greater than Moses, and about him as a child there was a something so striking, so marvelously beautiful, that his parents were fascinated by him.

Now, you can get a great deal of sunshine through a little hole, and you can see a very large prospect through a small glass, and it is as it were a little space that the faith of Amram and Jochebed looked through, but they saw great things. Here was born to them a lovely child, an extraordinary child, a child fair to God! Well, what did they say? “This remarkable child surely was not brought into the world without some purpose on the part of God with regard to it. We will save it alive. This is not a child that can die or shall die, we will save it alive. Pharaoh or no Pharaoh, such a child as this must and shall live.”

Perhaps they recollected that it was close upon the time when God had promised to deliver His people Israel. I should not think that believing Israelites had quite forgotten that God had told Abraham that they should be in bondage four hundred years, and they must have known that the time had expired within another eighty years, and it is probable that the mother said, “There is to come, a deliverer. There is something about this child's face which makes me hope that he will be the deliverer.”

Jochebed's faith that God would deliver His people was strong, and so she thought, “Perhaps this is to be the champion who shall bring Israel out of Egypt. I will save him. I will save him. He shall be hid. Pharaoh shall not have him. All his edicts shall not drive me to expose him to death.” She looked for a deliverer and expected him to come; this was faith.

O dear friends, if we had but such faith as this woman had, what wonders we should do, because we have not to look through a little glass, but have a wide window open before us. She had no Bible, the man who was to write the first book in the Bible was her own little child. She had only oral traditions handed down from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and her fathers, and she had only the fact that their child was exceedingly comely to cheer her in this special hope, but she believed in God, and that enabled her to endure danger for her child's sake. She believed God.

Now “God who in old times spoke to his servants by the prophets has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things.” He has let the full glory of heaven blaze forth in the face of Jesus, what manner of believers ought we to be, surrounded by such a light and nursed in the midst of such mercy. May God grant that our faith having so much encouragement may act strongly to the glory of God. But if sometimes you should seem to have very little to catch hold upon, dear brother,

do not throw away that little. If you should only see some little token for good, some one little cloud the size of a man's hand, still expect a shower of mercies. Even if all things should seem to be against you, and only one thing should appear to be for you, still draw sweet inferences from slender premises, or from what may appear to be slender premises, for truly the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever, and you may stay yourselves upon Him.

IV. A fourth principle is clear in the text, namely, that FAITH HAS GREAT POWER IN OVERCOMING FEAR.

The text says they were not afraid of the king's commandment. The king's commandment made all Egypt tremble. It does now. The Egyptians are still the meanest of all peoples. The description given of them in the prophet holds good to this day. Everywhere all over Egypt you will hear the stick going. No other race of men would ever bear the bastinado as the Egyptians do, the whole mass of them working, practically, for one man, that he may spend superabundance upon himself. As they are now so they have been from the beginning—a generation of yielding slaves, trodden down perpetually by greedy oppressors.

The Israelites in Egypt had no doubt caught very much the spirit of the Egyptians, and the spirit of the Egyptians was the exact opposite of the spirit of a true-born Englishman. You and I rejoice that we are free. We are in the habit of discussing laws and criticizing statutes, and if there were an unjust edict passed, we should not scruple for a single moment to break it. We should even feel a pleasure in putting our foot through an unrighteous act of parliament, for we have been trained for centuries in the habits and ways of liberty, and think and speak for ourselves, but it has never been so in Egypt, and specially was it not so in those days.

Then they might well swear by the life of Pharaoh for they all lived by the permission of Pharaoh. They belonged to him—their lands and everything. Hence it must have taken a good deal for these two, son and daughter of Levi, to feel that they could go against the king's commandment. They had a right to do so. What right had Pharaoh to order them to destroy their children? It was their duty to break the king's commandment, and they did it because they had faith.

I am bound to own, though I have commended the spirit of Englishmen, that there are a great many people even in this country who are very much ruled by what is called law. The church by law established will always enjoy a vast prestige because it has royalty for its head and the state at its back. To me its connection with the state is worthy to be called "the king's evil," but to others it seems a beauty spot. To the unthinking crowd that which is established by law must be right. Do the ritualistic priests come to us with legal authority? Well, then, who among us may dare to question their doings? Have certain rubrics been ordained by the Lords and Commons in parliament assembled? Has her Majesty given consent to them? Well, then, they must be proper and correct.

A great many people have never got out of that style of thinking, and perhaps never will, whereas to me it seems to be a first principle of the Christian church that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and that to all these great ones of the earth, the only thing is to say, "Keep your hands off the ark lest you meet with the doom of Uzziah. Come humbly like disciples to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him, but do not set up to be legislators for His dominion, nor dare to intermeddle or make rules or regulations for the spiritual kingdom. We care nothing for your ordinances and regulations. You have no power here. Let Caesar have his own, but he must not touch the things which belong to Christ." Now this woman by faith had got beyond the fear of Caesar, the Caesar of the age, the Pharaoh of the period. Whatever he might establish by law was just nothing at all to her. She broke away from it.

There was, no doubt, appended to Pharaoh's statute *a punishment* for anybody who should not obey the law. Perhaps four lives were in danger for the sake of that one little life—her husband, herself, Aaron, and Miriam, her daughter. If the officers enter the house and they find that little Moses has been saved it may be they will destroy the family, root and branch. That fear must have been upon her, but yet through faith she will run all risks, and so will all her family risk themselves that this promising child whom they believe God has sent to them for a noble purpose may live.

Now, dear friends, I want you if you have faith in Christ to manifest it by overcoming all fear of the consequences of doing right. It is right to obey God rather than man. God has the first claim upon us. Indeed God has the only claim upon us. We are to obey men for God's sake. But when man's authority oversteps itself and interferes with the authority of God then it becomes treason to the great King to obey even the greatest of kings. Parents and all in authority over us are to be obeyed in all things up to that point. It stops there.

I pray that you may have grace to do the right thing, everyone among you, even if it costs you everything. If to be honest would make you lose your situation, if to speak the truth would bring you into trouble about your daily bread, do it and dare it. "We must live," says somebody. I do not know that. It might be better to die than to live under some circumstances—certainly better to die a martyr than to live a traitor—better to die for the right than to live in sin. You say, "We *must* live." I will tell you another "must." We must *die*, and it becomes us to live with that always before us, for we shall be called to "give an account for the things done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil."

Beloved, may we have the faith that masters fear, so that we can go through the world fearless of popular opinion, fearless of ungodly censure, fearless of the little circle around us to whom some are altogether slaves. May we fear God and therefore be no more afraid of man's commandment. Be just and fear no consequences. If the heavens themselves should shake we would do no wrong, nor tell a single lie to prop up the skies. Let the sun, moon, and stars come down sooner than we should ourselves fall from our integrity. May faith give us such a fearless walk as this

V. But now, fifthly, and very briefly, I want you to notice that FAITH IS OFTEN DRIVEN TO GREAT SHIFTS.

The mother of Moses had to hide her child. I have no doubt if she was here, and if her husband were here, they would have a long story to tell of the things that happened, how often their hearts were in their mouths, how frequently poor Amram was in a cold sweat because one of his companions with whom he worked talked of going home with him, how that prying neighbor of theirs, who always wanted to put her finger into everybody's dish, tried to find out what there was that made Mrs. Jochebed keep at home so much, how they were afraid even of their own little children lest they might in their play talk of their little brother. What fear was upon the whole family, lest discovery should lead to destruction, we may guess from their hiding the babe.

The mother was put to great shifts to hide her child, and she used all her wits and common sense. She did not put her child in the front room, or carry it into the street or sit at the open door and nurse it, but she was prudent, and acted as if all depended upon her concealing the babe. Some people suppose that if you have faith you may act like a fool. But faith makes a person wise. It is one of the notable points about faith that it is sanctified common sense. That is not at all a bad definition of faith.

It is not fanaticism, it is not absurdity, it is making God the grandest asset in our account, and then reckoning according to the soundest logic. It is not putting my hands into boiling water with the impression that it will not scald me, it is not doing foolish and absurd things. Faith is believing in God and acting towards God as we ought to do. It is treating Him, not as a cipher, but as a grand over-topping numeral in all our additions and subtractions. It is realizing God: that is what it is. And in that sense faith is the truest reason, spiritualized and lifted up out of the ordinary sphere in which godless men choose to indulge in it, it is sanctified reason, enlightened from on high.

The mother wants the Lord to preserve her child, but she knows that God would have her to be the instrument of it, so she hides him, and when she can no longer hide him then comes that little business of making an ark. Faith is inventive, but at the same time faith always likes a precedent. I imagine that the mother of Moses thought of making that ark, and pitching it within and without, because she had heard about Noah's ark. Her faith made her love the memorial of the Lord's working salvation in days of old. She had not a book to read, but she had been told that story about Noah's ark. "Well," said she, "I

will have a little ark for my little Noah, and as I cannot otherwise save him, I will act as Noah did when, being moved with fear, he prepared an ark for the saving of his house.”

Brethren, it is always safe for faith to think out her plans, but if she can discover one of God’s plans and adopt it, then faith is more confident. There are always precedents if you look for them. You can find a Noah’s ark somewhere, and make a little one after that model. Of course your ark cannot be as big as Noah’s, but then if it were it would be too big for little Moses, he would be lost in it. A little ark will do for a little Moses. Go upon your own scale, and work after the model which some servant of God was taught to set you, and as you have the same God to deal with, and He has the same love to you as He had for the saints of old, you will find the old plans work exceedingly well.

Some of you young folks always want something new of your own. Well, after a good deal of trying all sorts of new things, I always find out that if my new plans succeed they turn out to have been old ones. There is nothing new under the sun that is worth trying. As sure as ever you strike out a new path you will find, if it is the right path at all, that somebody went that way years before. One has wittily complained of the ancients, that they have taken all our original thoughts, and all our original plans, and carried them out before we had an opportunity to claim them. But still, the faith of Moses’ mother was inventive. She invents the ark, yet does she borrow from the precedent of former days. She considers the days of old, and her spirit makes diligent search, and she acts after the way in which men of God had acted before.

A critical commentator complains that the faith of these parents was somewhat weak. It made them go part of the way towards putting their child out of existence by putting him out in the ark and leaving him among the bulrushes. Well, I do not know anything about that. I am always satisfied with not knowing what I do not know, that is to say, if I see that God says nothing about their weak faith, I think we had better not say anything about it either. By faith they did what they did, and they did the best thing possible, and if there was weakness, as probably there was, still, as a painter when he was sketching a favorite prince took care to put his finger upon an uncomely spot in his face, so does the Holy Spirit when He speaks of these godly parents omit all mention of defects in their faith. He praises their faith, and it would be presumption on our part to modify His verdict. May we have as much faith as they had when we are tried and we shall have no need to fear.

VI. Lastly, FAITH’S SIMPLE ACTS OFTEN LEAD ON TO THE GRANDEST RESULTS.

“Take care of that child, Miriam. Do not let him cry, for fear anyone should hear.” Now that everyday act of Miriam in nursing the babe, the mother giving the child the breast to stop its cries, the father watching the door, and all those little things were small matters, yet how wonderfully they conduced to the great future by which Pharaoh’s power was broken. The whole history of Israel rested upon hiding that little child.

The whole history of Israel did I say? Think of the names that hung upon the child’s life: Aaron, Joshua, Samson, Barak, David, Solomon, and even the divine baby of Bethlehem and the whole history of Israel were connected with Moses. Wrapped up in that child was the history of the world, for in the Jewish people all nations were blest, and blessing comes only to us Gentiles through the Jew. Greater blessings are yet to come by the same channel.

Oh yes, she takes care of Moses and hides him, and her reward is that Moses lives, and in due time there he is ready for his work, waving his rod over the fields of Zoan, working plagues and wonders, and there he is by the dark sea drowning all Pharaoh’s host and then leading the people to the mount of God, even to Horeb, and bringing them to the margin of the promised land. There he is, and he could not have been there if by faith his mother had not hid him three months. You do not know all you are doing when you do little things in faith.

Brothers and sisters, do not despise domestic duties, but bring up all your children, your little children, in God’s fear, correcting their little habits, bearing with their little ways, teaching them their little hymns, all lead up to great results. Do not, I beseech you, despise and sin against the child. You know not what is in him, or her, or what in God’s great book of history those tiny hands are yet to write.

If you have no children but have some other sort of work to do for God, do not think little of it. Grand events hinge on little incidents. Great wheels turn on little axles. There is a tiny part to each machine of unutterable importance. You never know the infinity of the influence of a word. To the wise man nothing is little, to the fool nothing is truly great. Make all things great by doing them by faith.

So there I finish. Have you faith in God? Are you really believing in Him? Are you trusting in Jesus? Have you accepted His way of salvation? My dear friend, if you have not you are going the wrong way to work in everything.

If I were to go into a country where there was a king, and I took note of everything except that king and the king's laws, I should soon get into trouble. If he were a king whose power was everywhere present, and yet I never recognized him, I should certainly make a failure of my life in his dominions. You come into this world where God is, and He is omnipotent to bless or curse you—will you disregard Him? You come under certain laws of His, and if you take no note of them or Him, but live only seeing what these eyes can see, and only knowing what comes under the cognizance of your senses, you will lead a bankrupt life, and fail at the last.

Why, sirs, I dare to say it concerning myself that the grandest object to my thought always is my God in Christ. I have most excellent and admirable friends here who love and esteem me, but I dare not lean on one of them, I must lean upon God alone. He gives me many mercies and favors, but I know what it is to have been without them, and to have been just as happy as I am with them, and now I know what it is to live above them, and just live upon God. I could bear to let all go if you leave me my God, but if there be no God then am I of all men most miserable.

I have learned to live on Him, to trust Him, and to run to Him with all my troubles, and I find that He always sustains me. I go to Him with all my joys and He keeps me steady under them. He is all in all to me, and I can and do only say this much about myself that I may recommend my Lord to you all. I beseech every young man, every middle-aged man, and even every old man here, to taste and see that the Lord is good.

I cannot make some of you poor people out, how can you live without God when you have so little comfort of a temporal sort? I cannot make you rich people out, how can you live without God when He is so good and kind to you? How can you forget Him who daily loads you with benefits? You seem to me to get the husks and not to look for the kernels. You are living on the outside skins and never suck the juice of joy. The soul of life is to live to God. The peace, the deep, the heavenly rest, which the soul gets, must always come by a living faith in Jesus Christ.

I say this because there is not one among you who, if you have this faith, may not exercise it whatever your calling may be. You may drive horses, you may measure calico, and weigh up sugar, and do all by faith to God's glory, you may be on the Exchange, or you may be a book-folder, or a porter, or a nursery governess, or a plain cook, but everywhere faith has something to do, and you can show the power of faith in common life.

God grant you may have faith wrought in you by the Holy Spirit. God is true, why do you not trust Him? God is true, why do you not believe Him? The Christ of God is gracious, why do you not accept Him? He loves to save sinners, He receives all them that come to Him. Why do you not come to Him? God grant you may, for Jesu's sake. Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—EXODUS 1:22, 2:1-10,
HEBREWS 2:23-29, PSALM 62**

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—23 (VERSION 2), 690, 678

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